In conclusion, the Member said that the Land Records Department as a separate department should be abolished, that the control of the L. R. M. work should be entrusted to Peishkars and Tahsildars as of old and that the work itself should devolve on the permanent Pakuthi Accountants under the supervision of Taluk Surveyors. He observed that it would not be a wise measure to do away with the Survey of *pokkuvaravu* subdivisions and suggested that the Taluk Surveyors might be asked to do that work also. He admitted that a Land Records Superintendent might be necessary as an independent officer for the whole State to give advice and expert opinion, and suggested that the Superintendent might also be assisted by one or two Assistants as District Survey Officers, with adequate pay, who should work under the orders of the Division Peishkars in giving professional advice as was done by the old Sub-Assistants. The Member concluded that, by adopting the above scheme, the work carried on at present could be managed more efficiently, bringing about at the same time a saving of about Rs. 1,25,000 per annum to Government.

President's reply.—Mr. Madhavan Nair has raised several points. The general trend of his speech is to the effect that the present Land Records Maintenance Department is practically a failure. In regard to this matter, the Dewan, in his Address delivered yesterday, has stated what exactly the position of the Government is. They are unable to share the view that the work of the Land Records Maintenance Department is a failure. The Dewan has observed : "The scope of the Land Records Maintenance Scheme was revised in 1096, its operation being mainly restricted to the inspection of *porambokes*, the detection of encroachments thereon, and the survey, demarcation and plotting of *poramboke* numbers and their subdivisions". The scope of the work of this department has thus been restricted. It has also been stated that the inspection of *porambokes* and the preparation of lists of unrecognised occupations thereon have been practically completed and that the occupation of about one-half of the *porambokes* has been regularised, and precautions taken against the indiscriminate and injurious occupation of such lands.

As regards the issue of notices under the Survey and Boundaries Regulation, I understand that a general notice has been published in the Government Gazette and that notices are also being issued to the parties whenever survey marks have to be repaired or renewed. I also understand that the persons against whom proceedings are taken under the Land Conservancy Regulation for unauthorised occupation of *porambokes* are supplied with details as to where and how the encroachments have been made, thus affording them a proper opportunity for laying their case before the deciding officer and seeing that no injustice is done to them.

The Member next referred to the want of accuracy in the survey and settlement records. This is a general question, and in regard to it, no definite answer can be given. Of course, corrections may be necessary and that work can be done only in individual cases when the existence of a mistake is pointed out to the Government. It is not possible for the Government to know where these mistakes occur unless the parties themselves point them out. This seems to be the only way to get such mistakes rectified. The Member also said that the Superintendent of Survey admitted the existence of about 50 per cent. of errors in survey. If that statement is correct, it only shows that practically nothing can be done now and that the mistakes have to be rectified in due course by means of a regular resurvey.

4. Policy of the Government in regard to Survey, Settlement and Poramboke.

Mr. Aiyappan Raman (Member, Vaikam taluk) dwelt at length on the evils of the last settlement as conducted in the State. He said that it would be seen from the Settlement Final Report that not one of the objects aimed at by the Settlement Proclamation of 1061 had been gained, that the survey plans and subdivision sketches were imperfect records and did not represent the actual state of affairs on the ground, that a careful perusal of the Settlement Report revealed that, instead of reduction of assessment on wet and garden lands, there was a perceptible increase, in addition to the inequalities which already existed, and that in short settlement had been carried out very imperfectly in spite of the principles so unmistakably laid down in the Settlement Proclamation. He stated that, soon after the settlement, instead of

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reduction of taxation, fresh imposition of taxes year after year was resorted to, registration fees and school fees were raised, criminal complaints, markets, trade and waterways were taxed, municipal taxes were multiplied and fishermen's nets and professions taxed, with the result that agriculture was neglected and the spade and the plough thrown aside. He said that the prospects after the last settlement had not at all been encouraging and added that he did not advocate a resettlement in the near future, but wished to emphasise that, whenever any settlement was proposed to be made, it shoud be conducted in the most satisfactory manner and without giving rise to the unhappy conditions to which the imperfect work of the last settlement had brought the State. He hoped that Government would bestow the most anxious consideration on the subject before entering upon any resettlement scheme and would also give the people all possible means to discuss and point out the best methods in which resettlement should be conducted. He thought that it would be conducive to the best interests of the agricultural population if the Government made the future settlement so thorough and scientific as not to necessitate any further settlement thereafter. It appeared to the Member that a permanent settlement of the land tax would greatly enhance the prosperity of the country. He pointed out that the last survey was so bad that matters could not be set right without a resurvey, that the people were groaning under the rigour of *poramboke* proceedings which seemed to have no finality, and that, unless the whole survey work was done in a proper manner, there was no hope of getting out of the difficulty. He said that, when it was realised that the imperfect nature of that survey had been the cause of the major portion of the *poramboke* proceedings, the justice of the prayer to stop this further harassment of the people would become apparent, and that, unless a resurvey of the State on up-to-date and sound lines was conducted, there would be no end of such proceedings. For these and other reasons and with a view to give relief to the people, he prayed that Government might put a stop to the further harassment of the people by means of *poramboke* proceedings, until they themselves rectified the mistakes in survey.

President's reply.—The remarks contained in the Member's speech may be broadly classed under two heads, *viz.*, (1) the unsatisfactory character of the past settlement and survey ; and (2) suggestions as to what should be done at the next settlement, though the Member has taken care to say that no re-settlement should take place in the near future.

As regards the first point, I think it a rather debatable question and probably it may not be fruitful to dilate upon it now. There may have been some errors and there may also be scope for improvement.

The suggestions made by the Member in connection with resettlement will be kept in view.

5. Hardship caused to the people under the Land Conservancy Regulation and the Revenue Recovery Regulation.

Mr. Eapen Geevarghese (Member, Mavelikara taluk) first spoke about the difficulties caused to the people by the working of the Land Conservancy Regulation. He said that the hardship caused in this respect could be measured by the number of *poramboke* encroachment cases filed and the amount of fines recovered thereunder during the past three years. 14,433 *poramboke* cases were disposed of in the whole State in 1098. In the Mavelikara taluk itself, about 1,000 cases were disposed of, and a sum of about Rs. 3,500 was realised as fine. The Member stated that, in exacting such amounts as fine from the people every year, several errors of procedure were being committed by the officers concerned. He complained that Government ignored the mistakes of their officers and failed to insist on the correct procedure being followed. He submitted that the President's reply to the representation of Mr. Madhavan Nair that the aggrieved party could prefer appeals to the higher authorities did not meet the ends of justice. The parties who were often obliged to alienate their houses and compounds for paying up the fines imposed, had no means to prefer appeals. To get a fine of Rs. 20 or Rs. 25 cancelled, larger amounts had to be spent and this deterred the people from preferring appeals.

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